

2015 JUNIOR ZOOKEEPER PROGRAM INFORMATION

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Junior Zookeeper (JZK) program is designed for students 14-17 years of age who have a desire to learn about how zoos care for and maintain their animal collections. Students will learn and develop the skills needed to pursue a career in animal care by assisting qualified staff in the daily husbandry needs of the animals. As a structured volunteer program, JZK participants will be trained on certain tasks that they will assist with during the duration of the summer. Students will be assigned a summer schedule outlining their work hours and will be able to participate in many of the tasks that provide a service to zoo patrons.

The JZK program is funded by participation dues, donations and the generous sponsorship of area businesses.

JZK Mission Statement:

The Mission of the Junior Zookeeper Program is to provide the opportunity for area youth to gain firsthand experience and knowledge in the field of exotic animal care while working to further the mission of the Columbian Park Zoo.

WHAT DOES A JZK DO?

JZKs perform only non-dangerous zoo tasks and are supervised by a team of qualified, professional zookeepers and educators.

Some of the tasks that Junior Zookeepers may perform include:

1. Assist with diet preparation and feeding of the animal collection
2. Assist with enclosure cleaning and exhibit maintenance
3. Assist with light landscaping and facility maintenance
4. Assist with grooming or exercising education program animals
5. Monitor interactive exhibits such as the Family Farm, Butterfly Garden Party and Wallaby Walkabout
6. Assist in the classroom with the education programs, such as summer camps
7. Learn animal handling skills and present small animals to various audiences
8. Present bio-facts (such as skulls or pelts) and animal information as exhibit-side interpreters
9. Interact with the public by answering questions about the animals and their positions as Junior Zookeepers
10. Inform our patrons about the mission of Columbian Park Zoo and the role of zoos in today's society

ELIGIBILITY

In order to participate in the 2015 JZK program, an individual must be between 14 and 17 years of age on June 1, 2015. Students who turn 18 during the course of the summer are permitted to apply. Students who are already 18 years of age or greater on June 1, 2015 are not eligible to participate in the JZK program, but may apply to our adult volunteer program.

What qualities do we look for in a Junior Zookeeper?

The Junior Zookeeper Candidate will be:

- Trustworthy, reliable and responsible
- Able to present a neat and well-groomed appearance
- Able to accept supervision of adults and ask for assistance when needed
- Courteous to his/her peers, the general public, volunteers and staff
- Willing to learn new skills and get his/her hands dirty
- Comfortable working with patrons of all ages and backgrounds
- Able to demonstrate a positive attitude at all times
- Supportive of the Columbian Park Zoo's mission

What kind of effort is required?

Junior Zookeepers are required to perform many kinds of physical tasks which may include standing for prolonged periods of time, safe lifting, reaching, bending, climbing, kneeling, shoveling/raking, pushing/pulling objects, and handling/grasping objects.

Much of the work JZKs do takes place outside and in various weather conditions. In addition, many zoo buildings are not air-conditioned and can be uncomfortable and smelly during hot summer months. A Junior Zookeeper must be willing and able to work in these types of environments. The Columbian Park Zoo will make reasonable accommodations to allow the participation of individuals with physical limitations.

Other eligibility requirements

Junior Zookeeper candidates must:

- Be available to attend both of the interview components, if invited*
- Be able to attend one of the mandatory Parent/Participant Meetings with at least one parent/guardian (*offered on two separate dates, please attend one of the two*)*
- Be able to attend all required training sessions*
- Be able to donate a minimum of 80 hours over the course of the JZK season.
- Have reliable transportation to and from the Zoo
- Be willing to adhere to all JZK policies and procedures
- Obtain a parent/legal guardian's written permission to apply for and participate in the JZK program.

**Please refer to the Important Dates section for more details*

What is required of a JZK parent?

We believe participation in a program such as this can be an important step towards teen independence. For this reason, parent requirements are kept to a minimum. JZK parents are expected to:

- Ensure their child meets all of the eligibility criteria above and adheres to all JZK guidelines (outlined in the *Columbian Park Zoo Junior Zookeeper Policies and Contract Form*); to be signed at the Parent Meeting
- Sign all participation agreements and permission slips
- Ensure their child has reliable transportation to and from the zoo
- Be available for counseling and feedback as the need arises

TIME COMMITMENT

Junior Zookeepers are expected to donate a minimum of 80 hours of time over the course of the 2015 JZK season. This can be achieved through a combination of regular summer work shifts and special event shifts made available to JZKs. The bulk of these hours should be completed during summer work shifts, with selected fall weekend available for additional hours and make-up shifts.

We understand that teens have busy schedules and can offer flexible scheduling to accommodate summer school, sports, band, jobs, family vacations, etc. However, before applying to the JZK program teens should consider all of the activities and obligations they will have this summer and decide where the JZK program will fit. Because the JZK program is a unique opportunity with a limited number of spaces each year, only serious and committed individuals should apply.

In addition to summer work shifts, first-year JZKs must attend a series of four weekend training sessions, which take place in April and May. These training sessions are crucial to the success and safety of teen participating in the program and are therefore mandatory for all first-year participants. During training sessions, teens learn the history of Columbian Park Zoo, important zoo hygiene strategies, handling skills with some of our Animal Ambassadors (education program animals), and much more.

Returning JZKs must also complete training. A single “fast-track” refresher training session is available. During the fast-track sessions, returning JZKs will review all important training and safety information, and will be presented with any new information not covered in previous years. This fast-track session will be offered one time, and returning JZKs not able to attend must then report to all 4 regular training sessions in April and May.

JZKs accepted into the program are also expected to attend a kick-off informational meeting in April with at least one parent or guardian. At this time summer work schedule shift requests are made, work procedures are reviewed, permission slips are signed and dues are collected.

Summer work schedules will be determined by the JZK Coordinator and communicated to JZKs by mid-May. **Work sessions begin the week of June 1st and end on August 7th, 2015. Each work shift is 4 hours long, and the following daily work shifts are available 7 days a week:**

8:00am-12:00pm, 12:00-4:00pm, and 3:00-7:00pm

Each student is expected to volunteer two work shifts per week. *(Please note that additional shifts may become available at the end of the summer season. In the event of extra shifts, students will be notified via email and will sign up on a first-come/first serve basis).*

Shifts will be assigned to each JZK based on a combination of their availability and the needs of the zookeeping staff. Additional shifts will be made available throughout the summer to coincide with special events taking place at the zoo. Throughout the fall semester, JZKs are also permitted to work on selected JZK Weekends.

Occasional schedule changes can be accommodated as summer school ends or football practice begins, etc. However, we aim to keep schedules as consistent as possible. Missed shifts due to excused absences can be made up by scheduling additional shifts through the JZK Coordinator.

PROGRAM DUES

The JZK program is funded by participation dues, donations and the generous sponsorship of area businesses. For the 2015 program year the dues are as follows:

New Junior Zookeepers - \$90

Returning Junior Zookeepers - \$75

These dues will be applied toward the cost of class materials, a t-shirt, the overnight field trip and other JZK activities and expenses. ***DO NOT SUBMIT DUES WITH YOUR APPLICATION MATERIALS.*** Dues must be paid at the one Parent/Participant Meeting that you choose to attend: April 7th or April 12th, 2015. Checks should be made payable to Friends of Columbian Park Zoo (FOCPZ).

Please note: dues are non-refundable for any reason.

We strive to keep the cost to participating families as low as possible. The JZK program is a unique opportunity that we feel no child should miss out on simply because of their family's inability to pay. Limited scholarship assistance is available to families with a genuine need. Likewise, those families with the ability to donate beyond their basic dues are encouraged to make a small contribution to the JZK Scholarship Fund.

OVERNIGHT TRIP

At the end of every summer, Junior Zookeepers are provided with the opportunity to visit a larger metropolitan zoo in the Midwest. Past trips have included visits to Cincinnati, Toledo, and Louisville. When available, JZKs are provided with a behind-the-scenes tour to look at the daily operation and how they care for a large variety of animals. After an overnight stay in a local hotel, JZKs will be able to spend the day at an amusement park as reward for their hard work.

This year's trip will take place on August 8-9, 2015. Please check your calendars now to determine your availability for this experience. This trip is not required, but all eligible* 2015 Junior Zookeepers are welcome to attend. The JZK program covers the costs of zoo and amusement park admission, lodging, transportation and some meals. Please note that participating JZKs are expected to pay for any uncovered meals and personal purchases associated with the overnight trip.

*Eligibility is dependent upon JZK making appropriate progress towards their 80 hour time commitment goal and adherence to all JZK guidelines and policies.

SELECTION PROCESS

Acceptance into the JZK program is competitive. JZK applications will be reviewed only if all materials are submitted by the application deadline. Not all applicants will be invited to participate in an interview. If selected, applicants will receive an email invitation to attend an assigned group interview on either March 7th or March 8th. Please only attend the session to which you are assigned. *When completing your application, be sure to include the email address that will be checked regarding this invitation.* A candidate invited to interview must participate in both the group interview and an individual interview to remain in consideration for the program. Candidates will sign up for individual interviews at the group interview session.

Acceptance into the program is based upon multiple factors including eligibility status, timely submission of all application materials, and participation in all mandatory interview components. Performance during the interview process, information included in recommendation forms and the application essay are also used to evaluate an applicant's suitability for participation.

Applicants will be notified of their acceptance status by letter on or by March 31, 2015.



2015 JZK Important Dates

If selected to participate as a 2015 Junior Zookeeper, the following dates should be added to your calendar. **These dates reflect mandatory training sessions and events that all JZKs must attend.** The only optional attendance event is the overnight trip in August.

All events will take place in the Bill and Donna DeFouw Education Center, located on zoo grounds at 2404 Wallace Avenue.

January 5, 2015

JZK APPLICATION AVAILABLE

March 2nd

5:00pm

Application Deadline

March 7 th	1:00-3:45pm	Group Interview 1	<i>(by email invitation only, sent 3/3)</i>
March 8 th	1:00-3:45pm	Group Interview 2	<i>(by email invitation only, sent 3/3)</i>
March 9-11 th	3:00-6:30pm	Individual Interviews	
March 17-19 th	3:00-6:30pm	Individual Interviews	

March 31st

Notification of Selected Participants

April 7 th	7:00 – 8:00pm	Parent/Participant Meeting 1*	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; font-size: small;"> <i>* Please RSVP to only ONE of the available sessions. The same material will be covered.</i> </div>
April 12 th	2:00 – 3:00pm	Parent/Participant Meeting 2*	
April 18 th	12:00 – 5:00pm	Fast-Track Training Session for Returning JZKs	
April 25 th	9:00am – 1:00pm	Training Session One	
May 2 nd	9:00am – 1:00pm	Training Session Two	
May 16 th	9:00am – 1:00pm	Training Session Three	
May 30 th	9:00am – 1:00pm	Training Session Four	

June 1st

Work Shifts Begin *(flexible depending on school district end date)*

August 7th

Last Day for Regular Work Shifts

August 8-9th Overnight Trip to a Nearby Zoo and Amusement Park

September – December Designated JZK weekends available for extra shifts



2015 Junior Zookeeper Application

Application Deadline: Monday, March 2, 2015 at 5pm

General Information

First Name _____ M.I. _____ Last Name _____ Nickname (if any) _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

(_____) _____ Birth Date _____ Age on June 1, 2015 _____
Home Phone Number

(_____) _____ Email Address* _____
Applicant Cell Phone Number

*Important information will be sent electronically. Please provide a current email address that will be checked regularly.

Have you participated in the JZK program in the past? Yes No

How did you hear about this program opportunity? _____

School

School Currently Attending _____

Grade for the 2015-2016 School Year _____

Parent/Guardian Information

First Name _____ Last Name _____ (_____) _____
Home Phone Number

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

(_____) _____ (_____) _____ Email _____
Work Phone Number Cell Phone Number

Parent/Guardian Permission

I, _____, have read over the enclosed information pages and give permission
(Parent/Guardian name)

for _____ to apply for the Junior Zookeeper program at the Columbian Park Zoo.
(JZK Applicant)

Group Interview Information

If selected, applicants will be invited to participate in a group interview. Due to space constraints, applicants will be assigned to a specific group interview date by zoo staff. *Please only attend the session to which you are assigned.* Invited applicants will receive their assigned session date via email on Tuesday, March 3, 2015.

Which of the following sessions can you attend? ☐ Saturday, March 7th from 1:00 - 3:45pm

(Please select all that apply)

☐ Sunday, March 8th from 1:00 – 3:45pm

Acknowledgements (to be completed by JZK applicant and parent)

Please review the JZK Program Information packet and acknowledge the following by initialing on the appropriate line. The JZK applicant is required to acknowledge each item below. A parent or guardian must initial to acknowledge their child's agreement below.

Child Parent

_____ I/We have read and understand the enclosed information about the JZK program.

_____ I am able to meet the time requirement of 80 volunteer hours this summer.

_____ I am able to attend both a group interview (date to be assigned) and an individual interview.

_____ I am able to attend one of the Parent/Participant Meeting sessions with at least one parent/guardian on:

Please select all that apply: ☐ April 7 from 7-8pm or ☐ April 12 from 2-3pm

_____ **New candidates:** I am able to attend all mandatory training sessions. *If not, please indicate conflicts below*.*

_____ **Returning candidates:** I am able to attend all mandatory training sessions OR the single fast-track session. *If not, please indicate conflicts below*.*

_____ I have reliable transportation to and from the Zoo.

_____ I understand that if selected for this program I will be asked to submit participation dues.

_____ I feel I am able to perform the tasks associated with the JZK program and work in the environment described. *If not, please indicate any required accommodations or special needs below**.*

_____ I understand that Junior Zookeeping is hard work and that I will have to work outside in hot, sweaty and smelly environments. I am ok with this.

_____ I am willing to make the JZK program a priority in my life through attendance, effort and adherence to all JZK policies and communication deadlines.

****Training Schedule Conflicts***

Please indicate the date of session in conflict and reason _____

*****Special Needs***

Please indicate any physical limitations and/or special needs _____

Essay

Tell us why you wish to participate in the 2015 Junior Zookeeper Program. Please include how your participation will benefit you, any applicable career goals, why you would make a great JZK, and any past animal experiences you would like to share. *Minimum 150, Maximum 500 words. Attach a separate sheet.*

APPLICATION DEADLINE

The deadline to submit your application materials is 5pm on Monday, March 2, 2015.

The application form, essay, and two recommendation forms are due at this time. You may submit your application paperwork at any time up to the application deadline using the following methods:

- In person at the Columbian Park Zoo main office
- In person at the Lafayette Parks and Recreation main office
- By mail at the following address: Columbian Park Zoo, Junior Zookeeper Program
1915 Scott Street, Lafayette, IN 47904.

What's the next step?

Once a complete application packet is received, you may be selected to participate in a group interview session. If selected, you will be invited to an assigned session via email on Tuesday, March 3, 2015. Please check your email for this important message!

Reminder: All applicants selected for an interview must attend their assigned group interview session and be available for a mandatory individual interview that will take place during after-school hours in the following weeks.

QUESTIONS?

For questions regarding the Junior Zookeeper application process, please contact:

Courtney Nave, JZK Coordinator

765-807-1543

cnave@lafayette.in.gov

Thank you for your interest in Columbian Park Zoo's Junior Zookeeper Program!



JUNIOR ZOOKEEPER RECOMMENDATION FORM

Applicant's Name _____

Date _____

Dear Educator,

The student above has applied to participate in the Junior Zookeeper program at Columbian Park Zoo and has selected you to provide a reference. As part of the application process, this recommendation must be returned to the Junior Zookeeper Coordinator no later than **March 2, 2015**. Please take a few moments to complete this form, providing answers with the above student in mind. Return completed form to: Junior Zookeeper Coordinator, Columbian Park Zoo, 1915 Scott Street, Lafayette, IN 47904.

Thank you for your assistance,
Courtney Nave, JZK Coordinator

Educator's Information:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____ Email Address _____

What is your role as an educator for the applicant? _____

How long have you known the applicant? _____

Please rate the applicant's attitude and personal attributes on a scale of 1 to 5.

1 = Not at all 2 = Once in a while 3 = Most of the time 4 = Almost always 5 = Always

Does he/she have enthusiasm for new projects?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A
Is he/she able to take the initiative on projects?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A
Does he/she have desire to grow and learn?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A
Is he/she self-motivated?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A
Does he/she work well independently?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A

Is he/she a leader?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A
Does he/she show a willingness to follow directions?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A
Is he/she able to accept criticism?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A
Does he/she accept rules?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A
Is he/she punctual?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A
Is he/she reliable?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A
Is the applicant assertive?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A
Does he/she work well with children?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A
Does he/she work well with adults?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A
Does he/she work well with peers?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A
Does he/she have a professional demeanor?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A

I DO / DO NOT recommend this applicant for participation in Columbian Park Zoo's Junior Zookeeper program.

(please circle one)

Additional Comments:

Signature _____

Date _____

Release of information:

The material on this evaluation sheet will help determine the JZK candidates for the 2015 season. Please select an option for the disclosure of this information.

_____ I give permission to provide the JZK candidate with full disclosure to the above information.

_____ Material in this evaluation may be disclosed to the candidate, with the exception of my personal information.

_____ I choose to not allow the disclosure of this evaluation to the JZK applicant.

Please feel free to contact the JZK Coordinator at 765-807-1543 with any questions or concerns. Thank you for your help!



JUNIOR ZOOKEEPER RECOMMENDATION FORM

Applicant's Name _____

Date _____

Dear Educator,

The student above has applied to participate in the Junior Zookeeper program at Columbian Park Zoo and has selected you to provide a reference. As part of the application process, this recommendation must be returned to the Junior Zookeeper Coordinator no later than **March 2, 2015**. Please take a few moments to complete this form, providing answers with the above student in mind. Return completed form to: Junior Zookeeper Coordinator, Columbian Park Zoo, 1915 Scott Street, Lafayette, IN 47904.

Thank you for your assistance,
Courtney Nave, JZK Coordinator

Educator's Information:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____ Email Address _____

What is your role as an educator for the applicant? _____

How long have you known the applicant? _____

Please rate the applicant's attitude and personal attributes on a scale of 1 to 5.

1 = Not at all 2 = Once in a while 3 = Most of the time 4 = Almost always 5 = Always

Does he/she have enthusiasm for new projects? 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

Is he/she able to take the initiative on projects? 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

Does he/she have desire to grow and learn? 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

Is he/she self-motivated? 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

Does he/she work well independently?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A
Is he/she a leader?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A
Does he/she show a willingness to follow directions?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A
Is he/she able to accept criticism?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A
Does he/she accept rules?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A
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Does he/she work well with peers?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A
Does he/she have a professional demeanor?	1 2 3 4 5	N/A

I DO / DO NOT recommend this applicant for participation in Columbian Park Zoo's Junior Zookeeper program.
(please circle one)

Additional Comments:

Signature _____

Date _____

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